

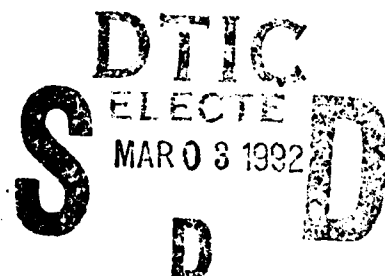


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# **Impact of Pregnant Women and Single Parents Upon Navy Personnel Systems**



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**92-05214**



February 1992

**Impact of Pregnant Women and Single Parents  
Upon Navy Personnel Systems**

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## **FOREWORD**

This is the fourth in a series of reports resulting from a 3-year research project to investigate the impact of pregnancy and single parenthood on mission accomplishment in the Navy. The purpose of this report was to review policies developed specifically to manage enlisted personnel who are pregnant or single parents with custody of their children and investigate the impact of these actions upon recruitment, assignment, and separations. The findings and recommendations are for the use of the Chief of Naval Personnel (PERS-00W, PERS-4, PERS-6).

The overall effort was conducted within the advanced development Program Element 0603707N, Work Unit R1770, under the sponsorship of the Chief of Naval Personnel (PERS-01). The results are expected to benefit the Navy by providing the information needed to develop policies to effectively manage pregnancy and single parenthood.

The authors wish to thank the enlisted detailers who responded to their survey and the directors of Family Service Centers, Child Development Centers, and Housing Offices who consented to be interviewed. Our special thanks goes to LCDR Gerry Rubink, PNC William Flannery, and YNCS Jack Kilgallen, who gave access to their file records and computers on several occasions; to CAPT Janice Lucie, who reviewed the report section on recruiting policy; to Carolee Callen, who provided the semiannual reports and reviewed the report section on Navy Child Development Centers; to LT Patricia Cruz, who faxed relevant sections of the Recruiting Manual and answered questions about recruiting policy; and to CDR Mary Duff and Maggie Ryan, who reviewed the assignment and separations sections. Finally, the authors are indebted to LCDR Maureen Davidovich for her thoughtful comments on the final draft of the report; and to LCDR Steve Artzer, who administered the detailer survey and obtained the critiques of subject-matter experts for each section of the report.

**RICHARD C. SORENSON**  
Technical Director (Acting)

## **SUMMARY**

### **Problem**

Because of the unique issues associated with being a single parent or pregnant woman in the Navy, specific policies have been enacted to manage these two groups. It has been claimed that implementing these policies constitutes an administrative burden.

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this report was to review policies created specifically to manage enlisted personnel who are single parents with custody of their children or are pregnant; and to evaluate the impact of these two groups of personnel upon recruitment, assignment, and separations. In addition, local policies at housing offices, Child Development Centers, and Family Service Centers regarding single parents and pregnant women were investigated.

### **Approach**

Navy personnel manuals were reviewed for policy statements pertinent to single parents and pregnant women. Extant data were gathered from records at the Bureau of Naval Personnel. Interviews were conducted and a survey was designed and administered. Analyses consisted of computing percentages and means and, when possible, making comparisons to appropriate Navy-wide statistics.

### **Findings**

1. Almost all single parents enlisting prior to FY90 regained custody of their children during their first enlistment.
2. Less than 50 women were separated in recruit training in FY90 due to pregnancy.
3. Single parents and pregnant women are not among the most difficult personnel that enlist-detailers have to assign. Military-married-to military personnel require over six times as much detailer time as single parents.
4. During FY90, 25 women were returned early from overseas due to pregnancy and 18 for other reasons, compared to 86 men. Thus, women are overrepresented among personnel returned prematurely to the United States. Relocation of these women cost less than that of men probably because they had fewer dependents.
5. Transferring a pregnant woman from ship to shore is not particularly time consuming, and averages less than two cases per month per enlisted detailer who make such assignments.
6. Single parents are three times as likely as married parents to receive a humanitarian transfer but the annual number is very small ( $N = 62$ ).
7. Separations due to pregnancy or parenthood in FY90 were a very minor cause of discharge from the Navy. Single women who became pregnant were more likely than married women to be

separated. While single parents were more apt than married parents to receive a hardship discharge, only 32 single parents were separated for this reason in FY90.

8. Only 11 percent of the relevant parents stationed overseas and 18 percent of those stationed in the continental United States had a current Dependent Care Certificate in their service record.

9. At the Child Development Centers visited, twice as many children were on the waiting list as were being cared for. The average wait was from 11 months for 2- to 5-year olds to 17 months for 1-year olds. Single parents are not being given priority placement at the centers but military-married-to-military parents are.

10. Neither single parents nor pregnant women are receiving preferential treatment from housing officers.

11. Family Service Centers are willing to meet the needs of single parents and pregnant women and some have exceptional programs in place.

### **Conclusions**

1. Single parents, as compared to married parents, do not burden the support systems that were included in this investigation.

2. Pregnant women have little impact on housing, Family Service Centers, and recruiting/recruit training. They are responsible for unexpected assignment transactions and separations from the Navy, though the impact is not great in comparison to other groups.

### **Recommendations**

Because of troubling information that was gathered during data collection, the following recommendations are made.

1. Pregnant women who are living in barracks should be allowed to get on the housing waiting list as soon as medical verification of their pregnancy is made.

2. The reasons why single parents are not making greater use of Navy Child Development Centers should be determined, as this group has the greatest need of all parents for child care.

3. Regulations regarding the Dependent Care Certificate are not being enforced. If this form is expendable or irrelevant, it should be dispensed with; if it is important, commands should be required to comply.

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## **INTRODUCTION**

The growth in the number of military women that has occurred over the past 15 years brought about profound changes in the demographics of the armed forces. Not only has the gender mix changed but a military that was predominately young, male, and single now includes a large proportion of personnel characterized as mature and married-with-children. While men still make up the vast majority of active duty parents, they usually have a spouse who is the primary caretaker of the children. Military women with children, similar to civilian working mothers, are required to perform two primary roles and need support services to help them fulfill their responsibilities to the Navy and their families.

The family issues that have caused the most controversy are those associated with single parents and pregnant women. The primary reason is that they are new issues, requiring new support services, adaptations, and regulations. Like the other military services, the Navy was unprepared to accommodate such personnel.

The 1987 Study Group on the Progress of Women in the Navy reported that single parents are perceived to be an administrative burden to their commands and recommended that the extent of the burden be investigated (Secretary of the Navy, 1987). In addition, the group's report emphasized that a study concerning pregnancy and its impact was needed. The Chief of Naval Personnel subsequently requested that the Navy Personnel Research and Development Center design a project that would address these two recommendations. The research, consisting of several phases, began in 1988 and focuses on enlisted personnel only.

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this phase of the research was to review policies and practices designed to manage single parents and pregnant women, and to investigate the impact that these policies have on the Navy enlisted recruitment, assignment, and separation systems. In addition, the support functions of child care, housing, and family services were considered. Only personnel policies were addressed because the medical management of pregnancy is beyond the scope of the research effort.

### **Population Involved**

During the initial phase of the overall research effort, it became apparent that Navy leaders did not know how many personnel were single parents with custody of their children or how many women became pregnant annually. Although computerized data bases provide information on marital status and the number of dependents that Navy members support financially, they fail to indicate whether such children reside with the military parent. Past estimates of pregnancy have been based on data provided by Navy hospitals. Such figures are known to be underestimates, however, because they do not take into account terminated pregnancies or women delivering in non-Navy hospitals. As a consequence, the first step in conducting the research was to determine the size of the populations involved.

During May 1988, a survey was administered to over 9,000 enlisted personnel to investigate the parental and marital status of women and men, and to determine how many women were

pregnant (Thomas & Edwards, 1989). The relevant questions were readministered in 1990 to verify the reliability of the earlier statistics (Thomas & Thomas, 1990). Table 1 presents the percentages of nonparents, married parents, and single parents whose children were living in the household obtained from the 1988 and 1990 administrations. Based on these rates, numbers of enlisted personnel in the Navy population were estimated.

**Table 1**  
**Parental Rates and Estimated Populations in**  
**1988 and 1990 Navy Enlisted Force**

Group	1988		1990	
	%	Estimated N	%	Estimated N
Not a parent	60.7	297,001	59.4	285,550
Married parent	35.1	171,522	37.4	179,850
Single parent	4.2	20,707	3.1	15,050

Female respondents to the surveys were asked if they were pregnant. Their responses were weighted within paygrade to arrive at the percentage of Navy women who were pregnant at the time they took the survey. In 1988, 8.6 percent of E-2 through E-9 Navy women were pregnant; in 1990, 8.9 percent were pregnant. Thus, the rate appears to be stable. Based on the assumption that a woman is aware of her pregnancy for 8 of the 9 months, an annual Navy pregnancy rate of 13 percent was estimated. This rate is comparable to that of the civilian age cohorts of Navy women.

### APPROACH

The Naval Military Personnel Manual (MILPERSMAN) (Chief of Naval Operations, 1987), Enlisted Transfer Manual (ENLTRANSMAN) (Chief of Naval Operations, 1979), and Navy Recruiting Manual-Enlisted (CRUITMAN-ENL) (Navy Recruiting Command, 1988) were reviewed for policy statements referring specifically to single parents or pregnant women. Pertinent instructions that have not been incorporated into these manuals also were sought.

Obtaining data regarding the effect of implementing these policies initially required discussions with personnel within the Bureau of Naval Personnel (BUPERS). These talks, in turn, led to other offices where data might reside. Data were also obtained from the Chief of Naval Education and Training and the Chief of Naval Recruiting Command. To supplement the extant data, interviews were conducted with housing, Family Service Center (FSC), and Child Development Center (CDC) directors in 17 geographic locations. In addition, a special-purpose survey was designed and administered to all enlisted detailers to investigate the assignment burden caused by single parents and pregnant women.

Almost all of the data consisted of frequencies, which were compared to relevant population distributions to put the numbers into perspective. Only percentages or means were computed and no statistical tests of significance were performed on the data.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Recruitment

#### Single Parents

Recruiting policy specifically discourages the enlistment of applicants with dependents "because of the difficulties encountered by personnel of lower paygrades in areas of subsistence, housing, shipment of household effects, etc." (CRUITMAN-ENL 1130.8C). Beginning in 1974, unmarried applicants with custody of another person needed a waiver to be eligible for enlistment. In 1982 the policy was revised to state that "requests for waivers are not desired." Today, single parents with custody are not eligible for enlistment.

Unmarried applicants with dependents, who do not have custody, are required to sign an Enlistment Statement of Understanding that states:

*I cannot have custody or regain custody of my dependents for the term of my enlistment (unless due to circumstances beyond my control). If I regain custody and it is discovered that this was by intent from the time I enlisted, I will be discharged for fraudulent enlistment.*

While this particular form is new, the requirement to sign a similar statement was put into effect in October 1989. Unmarried male applicants who have children born out of wedlock and have never had custody, or who are fathers of an unborn child are considered to have dependents and require a waiver for enlistment.

Based on the above discussion, personnel who are single parents have very little impact on the recruiting system. If they have custody or regain custody of their dependents during their first enlistment, other personnel systems could be impacted, however. Unforeseen circumstances occur and a parent may regain custody; or a parent may never have relinquished custody. The former situation is unavoidable, but the latter represents subversion of the regulation, either by the parent, the recruiter, or both.

Determining the frequency with which single parents regain custody is very difficult. The "fraudulent entry" discharge code is not exclusive to single parents but also applies to enlistees who deliberately conceal other disqualifying information (e.g., are homosexual or previously had been discharged under other-than-honorable conditions). As a consequence, self-report information must be relied upon. A survey conducted in June 1990 as part of this research effort contained a question concerning when single parents regained custody of their children. Table 2 presents the distributions of the responses of the 75 women and men who had been single parents when they enlisted and had their children living with them when the survey was administered.

**Table 2**  
**Single Parents who Regained Custody**  
**of Their Children**

Period when Custody Gained	%	N
Had custody when enlisted	57	43
Regained custody after training but before end of 1st enlistment	37	28
Regained custody after 1st enlistment	5	4

One of these parents had enlisted since October 1989 and, therefore, might have been eligible for separation as a fraudulent entry because of concealment of parental status. Twenty nine additional parents were in their first enlistment and 63 percent of them stated they had custody of their dependents when they enlisted. These parents must have received waivers or misrepresented their status. Perhaps the new enlistment statement will reduce the frequency of this occurrence.

### **Pregnancy**

Women who are pregnant are not eligible for enlistment (CRUITMAN-ENL 1130.8C, Chap 2 1-1-15). A pregnancy test is conducted during the medical examination prior to admission into the Navy and again within 72 hours of arrival at recruit training. If a recruit is found to be pregnant and the medical department certifies that the pregnancy existed prior to entry into the Navy, she is separated without maternity benefits as an erroneous enlistment (MILPERSMAN Chap 11 3620220).

Statistics are not maintained on the number of applicants who are found to be medically ineligible for enlistment due to pregnancy. Reasons for separation during recruit training, however, are documented. In 1990, 49 of the 6,576 recruits who were discharged were pregnant, representing less than 1 percent of all recruit separations (5.5% of female recruit separations).

### **Assignment**

Assignment policies that specifically refer to single parents or pregnant women are of three types: normal assignment, assignment to and early return from overseas, and reassignment for humanitarian reasons or pregnancy.

#### **Normal Assignment/Transfer**

For assignments within the continental United States (CONUS), there are no restrictions on single parents and very few that apply to pregnant women. When permanent change of station orders are being negotiated, it is the responsibility of the female service member to inform her detailee if she is pregnant so that an appropriate date of transfer can be established (i.e., before her 28th week if the move requires that she fly). If she becomes pregnant after her orders have been written, both her present and gaining commands also may become involved and the orders may

have to be modified to best accommodate childbirth and convalescence. Pregnant women are not assigned to ships, even when the ship is homeported in CONUS, and are not assigned to isolated areas. Reassignments are deferred until 4 months following childbirth unless the woman volunteers for an earlier transfer (Chief of Naval Operations Instruction (OPNAVINST) 6000.1A, 1989; NAVADMIN 143/91).

Despite the few regulations requiring special handling of pregnant women, detailers may take special care in ensuring that their next duty station meets their needs for military child care, or proximity to family members who can provide support. More time and effort also could be expended in detailing single parents out of consideration for their situation. Both of the previous statements are hypothetical, but worthy of investigation. In other words, these two groups may impose upon the detailing system in subtle ways. To investigate the extent to which this supposition is correct, a special-purpose survey was designed and administered to all available enlisted detailers in February 1991 ( $N = 130$ ). The questions addressed difficulty in detailing people with certain characteristics, time involved in detailing to various types of duty, interval that billets are vacant when incumbents leave prior to their rotation date, and experiences in detailing single parents and pregnant women. Table 3 presents the results of the survey that are pertinent to this discussion.

When asked to name the six types of personnel that they consider most time consuming to assign, 17 of the 130 detailers cited single parents and 10 named pregnant women (untabled) as one of their choices. By far the most time consuming group for these enlisted detailers are dual military couples. According to a Navy-wide survey conducted in 1990 as part of this research, approximately 24,000 enlisted personnel are married to another military member, a group of some consequence. If we assume that one-third will be rotated in any year, then 8,000 dual military personnel will be detailed annually. Forty-five percent of detailers stated that dual military personnel took, on the average, 4.3 more hours than other personnel to assign, yielding a "burden index" of 15,612 hours annually.<sup>1</sup> In comparison, the estimated number of enlisted single parents in 1990 was 15,050 (estimated 5,017 deployed annually). Thirteen percent of the detailers stated that single parents took an average of 3.6 more hours than others to assign, resulting in a "burden index" of 2,362 hours annually. When asked specifically about the detailing of single parents and pregnant women, about one-third of the detailers found single parents to be time consuming and one-fourth said that pregnant women are difficult to detail. Apparently, in comparison to other groups, however, pregnant women are not among the groups on whom detailers have to spend a lot of time.

### Assignment Overseas and Early Returns

Single parents must maintain worldwide availability to perform a full range of military duties or be separated from the Navy (MILPERSMAN 3810190). The transfer manual states that "the unique situation of those individuals with dependents who are single parents or military members married to other military members does not in itself disqualify them for overseas duty" (4.011). Moreover, there are no geographic locations to which single parents cannot be assigned, unless they have more than three dependents (ENLTRANSMAN, 4.0). Since these restrictions apply to

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<sup>1</sup>59/130 detailers x 8,000 personnel x 4.3 hours.

all parents, single parents should be no more difficult to detail overseas than any other group of personnel that may request consideration of their desires and status.

**Table 3**  
**Detailers' Responses to Questions Regarding Assignment of**  
**Pregnant Women and Single Parents**  
(N = 130)

Question		
	Number	Extra Hours to Detail
<b>What types of personnel are the most time consuming to detail?<sup>a</sup></b>		
Member with military spouse	59	4.3
Personnel in specific rate	30	3.5
Those needs specific geographic region	28	3.1
Single parents	17	3.6
Those wanting specific assignment	16	3.4
Women	14	3.1
<b>Do the single parents that you detail require special handling?</b>		Percentage
No, I treat them like everyone else	32	25%
I don't spend a lot of extra time on the assignment	52	40%
Yes, they require a lot of extra time	42	32%
Not applicable	4	3%
<b>Do you find pregnant women difficult to detail?</b>		
Not particularly	48	37%
Yes	34	26%
Not applicable	48	37%
<b>Do you fill afloat billets when a pregnant woman has to leave?</b>		
My billets are closed to women	48	37%
I've never filled an afloat billet due to pregnancy	30	23%
I've handled reassignments of this type in the past 6 months	52	40%
		Mean
Number of pregnancy ship to shore reassignments in past 6 months		10.8
Number of weeks these billets were vacant		11.2

<sup>a</sup>This was an open-ended question and respondents were presented six spaces for multiple answers. Only the six most frequently mentioned groups are indicated.

Pregnant women, however, are a restricted group. After the beginning of their 28th week, they cannot be assigned or travel to an overseas duty station (4.012). In addition, women who are not in family housing who become pregnant while assigned in Adak (Alaska), Diego Garcia in the Indian Ocean, Guantanamo Bay (Cuba), Philippine Islands, and Keflavik (Iceland) are transferred if these locations lack sufficient family housing.

Prior to being assigned overseas, Navy personnel are screened for medical and dental fitness, suitability of their dependents, drug- and alcohol-related problems, psychiatric disorders, job performance, disciplinary history, financial stability, and individual/family attitudes and expectations toward the area and its people (ENLTRANSMAN, 4.012). The commanding officer of the detaching command subsequently submits a Report of Suitability/Unsuitability for Overseas Assignment to BUPERS (PERS-462/40BB). If the receiving command finds after the transfer that an individual or his/her dependents are not suited for overseas service, an Overseas Screening Deficiency Report is filed along with a request that the service member and/or dependents be returned to CONUS. Such a report is not filed for a woman assigned to one of the five "inadequate" overseas locations because the screening process was not faulty and no decision needs to be made about her return (i.e., she must be removed from the area).

While pregnancy as a cause of early return from overseas poses less of an administrative burden than other causes, there is a cost in terms of permanent change of station funds. Since these women had not been accompanied by dependents to the location, however, the cost would not be great. All Navy personnel in Cuba, Keflavik, and Adak must live on base, so the reason for returning pregnant women is insufficient family housing. A woman living in family housing who becomes pregnant remains in country. Local commanders in the Philippine Islands have determined that it is not feasible to require women with dependents to live in off-base housing due to security problems and on-base housing is often not available. Diego Garcia is an unaccompanied duty station; any move from that area is for the military member only.

To compare the number of pregnancy early returns to returns for other reasons, records of personnel who returned prematurely in fiscal year 1990 were reviewed for gender of service member, reason for return, and cost of move back to CONUS. In addition, the enlisted master tape record for the same year was searched to extract the records of all women who were returned from Adak, Diego Garcia, Guantanamo Bay, Keflavik, and the Philippines because of pregnancy. Table 4 presents the results of these data extractions.

Proportionately more women than men were returned early from overseas, even when pregnancy is discounted as a reason. A partial explanation for this finding is that proportionately more women are stationed overseas, particularly in Europe. In 1991, 21.7 percent of all enlisted women and 12.7 percent of enlisted men were assigned to bases outside of the CONUS. The average cost for moving a woman service member was lower than moving a man due to women's smaller households. That is, Navy women are less likely to be married and they have fewer children than Navy men (Thomas & Edwards, 1989). Pregnant women who were moved from the five special areas had no dependent children, so the average cost of their reassignment was quite low.

**Table 4**  
**Early Returns from Overseas**  
**(Fiscal Year 1990)**

Location	Men	Women	
		Not Pregnant	Pregnant
Europe	30	13	2
Asia	29	1	0
Pacific Islands	12	1	0
Africa	3	1	6
Alaska/Hawaii	5	0	7
Cuba/Puerto Rico	4	1	10
Other <sup>a</sup>	3	1	0
Total	86	18	25
Average cost of move	\$7,174	\$5,944	\$2,046

<sup>a</sup>Bermuda, Antigua, Panama.

Another category of early return from overseas, which may or may not represent a permanent transfer, is a medical evacuation (MEDEVAC) to a hospital in the United States. The Armed Services Medical Regulating Office at Scott Air Force Base maintains records of all MEDEVACs (all services; active duty personnel and dependents). Records were obtained for fiscal years 1988 through 1991 and data were extracted for active duty Navy personnel whose originating command was overseas and who were evacuated to a treatment center in CONUS or Hawaii. Because gender was not indicated in the records, MEDEVACs for pregnancy could not be compared to MEDEVACs of women for other reasons or to MEDEVACs of men. Medical diagnosis is coded in the records, however, so the decision was made to analyze returns due to pregnancy, AIDS (a patient population that is 98% male), and substance abuse. Table 5 shows the results of this comparison.

Pregnancy was responsible for 1 percent or less of all active duty MEDEVACs in each of the years. The percentages for AIDS ranged from 1 to 4 percent and for substance abuse, 4 to 8 percent. Since the Air Force does not bill the services for air evacuations, no direct cost was incurred.



**Table 5**  
**Number of Medical Evacuations from Overseas**  
**from 1988 through 1991**

Diagnosis	Number			
	FY88	FY89	FY90	FY91
Pregnancy	14	7	17	17
AIDS	56	23	18	15
Drugs/Alcohol	115	89	63	84
All other reasons	1,248	1,294	1,595	1,692

#### **Reassignment from Ships Due to Pregnancy**

The Navy instruction on the management of pregnant service women (OPNAVINST 6000.1A, 1989) states that a woman shall not remain on board a ship beyond her 20th week of pregnancy or if the ship is deploying. Women who have sea duty time remaining when taken off the ship are reassigned to sea duty when their infants are 4 months old.

When a woman aboard a ship becomes pregnant, she and the medical officer are responsible for informing the commanding officer. Based on her physical condition, the safety of the work environment, and the ship's mission, the woman is either made available for immediate reassignment or BUPERS is informed of the date of her 20th week. Thus, pregnancy in ships impacts on individual units and upon detailers who have an unexpected billet to fill and an unexpected service woman to reassign.

Pregnancy reassignments are monitored by BUPERS within the enlisted detailing branch. In fiscal year 1990, 1,145 women in ships, out of the approximately 8,600 women at sea, were made available for reassignment, representing an average of 95 per month. In the detailer survey, 52 of the respondents said that they had detailed a pregnant woman from an afloat to a shore billet in their present job. The average number of such reassignments performed during the most recent 6 months was 10.8, or less than 2 per month.<sup>2</sup> The billets left by the pregnant women were vacant, on the average, for 11.2 weeks before replacements arrived. Among the detailers for whom the question was applicable ( $N = 82$ ), 59 percent stated that detailing a pregnant woman was not particularly difficult.

#### **Humanitarian Reassignments**

Reassignment for humanitarian reasons (HUMS) may be requested when a severe hardship exists and the problem affects the service member's immediate family. If no other family member is capable of providing the necessary assistance and the hardship can be resolved within a reasonable time frame, a humanitarian reassignment usually will be approved (ENLTRANSMAN,

<sup>2</sup>Nonrated personnel are reassigned by the Enlisted Personnel Management Center (EPMAC).

15909D). Two paragraphs within the transfer manual apply specifically to HUMS for single parents; the first permits a transfer and the second denies it.

18.011 Special Consideration: Divorce, when the member has a final divorce decree, has court awarded physical custody of the children, and the time is needed to make arrangements for their permanent care.

18.02 Humanitarian/Hardship Reassignments not considered within the Purview of this Chapter: For the sole reason of being a single parent. Raising children is considered a long term problem and will normally be considered for a hardship discharge.

Thus, personnel can obtain a HUMS reassignment when they are awarded custody of their children in a divorce decree, but will be denied a reassignment if single parenthood per se is the cause of the hardship. Pregnancy is not a sufficient reason to be granted a HUMS reassignment. The ENL-TRANSMAN states that "normal pregnancy, threatened miscarriage, breech birth, caesarean section, or RH incompatibility... are generally not sufficient to show a hardship" (18.022).

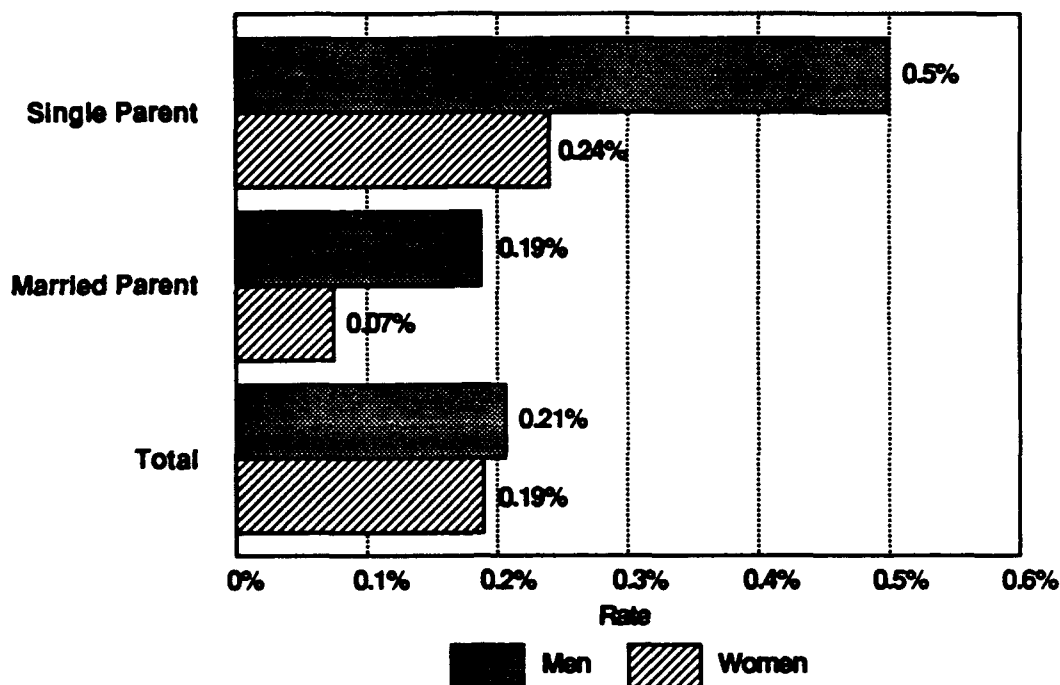
Requests for a HUMS reassignment or a hardship discharge are administratively controlled by BUPERS (PERS-40HH) and hard copy records of these requests are maintained for 12 months. To investigate whether single parents impact disproportionately upon this administrative process, all requests processed between May 1990 through April 1991 were reviewed. Reassignments or discharges that were granted because of a hardship that specifically mentioned a dependent child or children were tallied by gender and marital status of the parent. Table 6 presents the results.

**Table 6**  
**Humanitarian Transfers (HUMS) by**  
**Sex and Marital Status of Parent**

Service Member's Parental Status	Number	
	Men	Women
Single parent	50	12
Married parent	324	8
Total	374	30

The numbers shown in Table 6 are difficult to interpret without knowledge of how many Navy men and women are single and married parents. As a consequence, rates were determined by comparing HUMS transfers to estimates of population statistics by gender and marital status. These estimates were based on the percentages obtained from a recent survey (Thomas & Thomas, 1990). As shown in Figure 1, the HUMS reassignment rate of female single parents is half that of male single parents. The difference between married parents of each gender is even greater. Overall, single parents are about three times as likely as married parents to be granted a HUMS. The actual numbers are so small ( $N = 62$ ), however, that it is difficult to believe that single parents constitute

an administrative burden. Moreover, the small numbers are not a function of few requests being granted. In FY90, 82 percent of all requests for HUMS were approved.<sup>3</sup>



**Figure 1. Percentage of enlisted parents by marital status who received a humanitarian transfer because of a dependent child during a recent 12-month period.**

## Separations

Separation of enlisted personnel at the "convenience of the government" may occur for reasons of hardship, parenthood, and pregnancy/childbirth as well as other reasons that are unrelated to the topic of this report. Hardship discharges apply only to single parents who are unable to make adequate arrangements for the care of their children. Separations for reasons of hardship and parenthood may be awarded by commanding officers with special court-martial convening authority provided the member does not object to the discharge. Commanding officers and officers-in-charge can grant a discharge for pregnancy.

### Hardship Separation

The MILPERSMAN (3620210) states that a hardship separation requested by a military member may be granted when: (1) a severe hardship, not normally encountered by other Navy personnel, exists that is not temporary in nature and cannot reasonably be resolved within the near time frame; (2) the hardship affects the service member's immediate family; (3) the hardship occurred and has been severely aggravated since entering Navy; (4) the service member and family have made every reasonable effort to alleviate the hardship and there are no other relatives nearby

<sup>3</sup>Personal correspondence with YNCS Kilgallen of 31 May 1991.

who are capable of providing the necessary assistance; or (5) the discharge of the member will result in the elimination or material alleviation of the hardship. The regulation goes on to state that this type of a separation will not be authorized for financial or business reasons, indebtedness, personal convenience, a member's mental or physical health, moral support for an immediate family member whose life expectancy is less than 6 months (qualifies as a humanitarian reassignment), or in custody battles or divorce proceedings. Often, hardship separations are the end result of requests for HUMS reassignment. In reviewing such requests, BUPERS may determine that the hardship cannot be resolved within a reasonable time and will either approve a hardship discharge or recommend to the commanding officer that the service member be offered such a discharge.

Since the question under investigation is whether single parents impact disproportionately upon this system, only separations that involved dependent children were needed for the analysis. Personnel tapes do not carry information regarding the close relative who caused the situation leading to a hardship discharge. Therefore, to obtain the data, original paper records of all requests for HUMS that resulted in a hardship discharge were reviewed for the May 1990 to April 1991 period. Personnel who obtained command-authorized discharges would not have a record on file, so those that were reviewed were necessarily a sample.<sup>4</sup> There is no reason to believe, however, that the available data were biased in regards to the major variable of interest--single versus married parenthood. Table 7 presents the results of the review of these records.

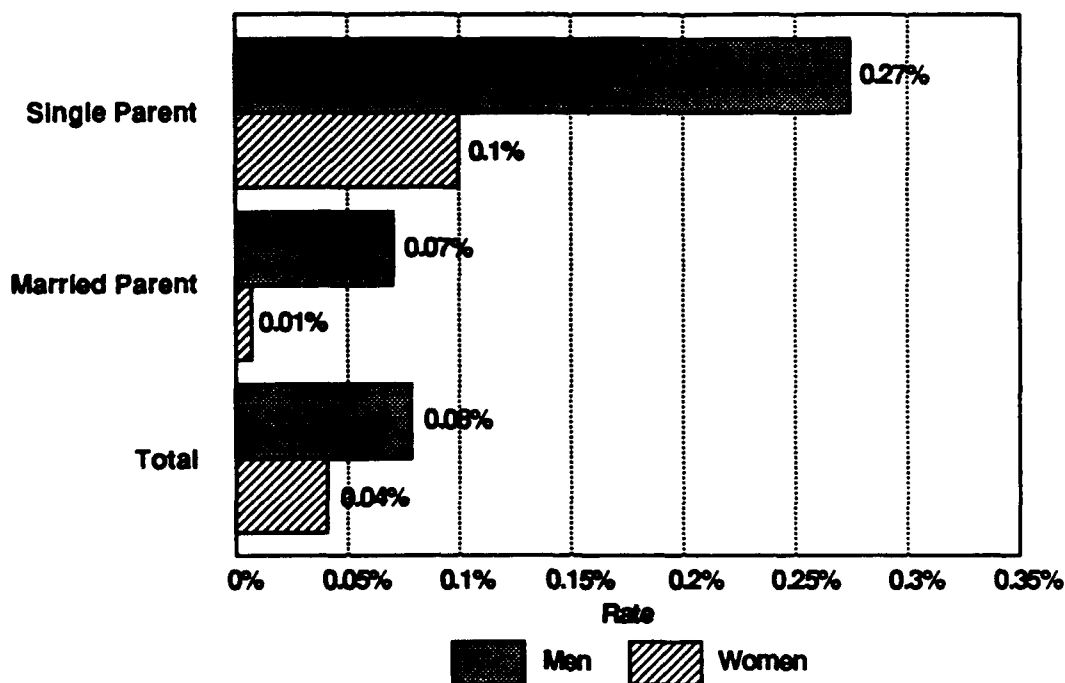
**Table 7**

**Hardship Separations Involving Dependent Children Granted by the  
Bureau of Naval Personnel by Sex and Marital Status of Parent**

Service Member's Parental Status	Number	
	Men	Women
Single parent	27	5
Married parent	125	1
Total	152	6

Because male and female parents are distributed very differently in regards to marital status, Figure 2 compares the number of cases in each category to the relevant parental population based on the estimates developed from a Navy-wide survey (Thomas & Thomas, 1990). While it is clear that single parents are granted proportionately more hardship discharges than married parents, the numbers are so small ( $N = 32$ ) as to be of little consequence. The table also shows that women, married or single, are less apt to receive a hardship discharge than men. Since these data represent somewhat over half of all such separations granted in a 12-month period, the results should be representative of all hardship separations, including those awarded at the command level.

<sup>4</sup>Hardship discharge authority was delegated to commanding officers in 1987. Since that time, slightly under half of all such discharges have been granted by commands and PERS-40HH has approved the remainder.



**Figure 2. Percentage of enlisted parents by marital status who received a hardship discharge due to a dependent child from the Bureau of Naval Personnel in a recent 12-month period.**

### **Parenthood Separation**

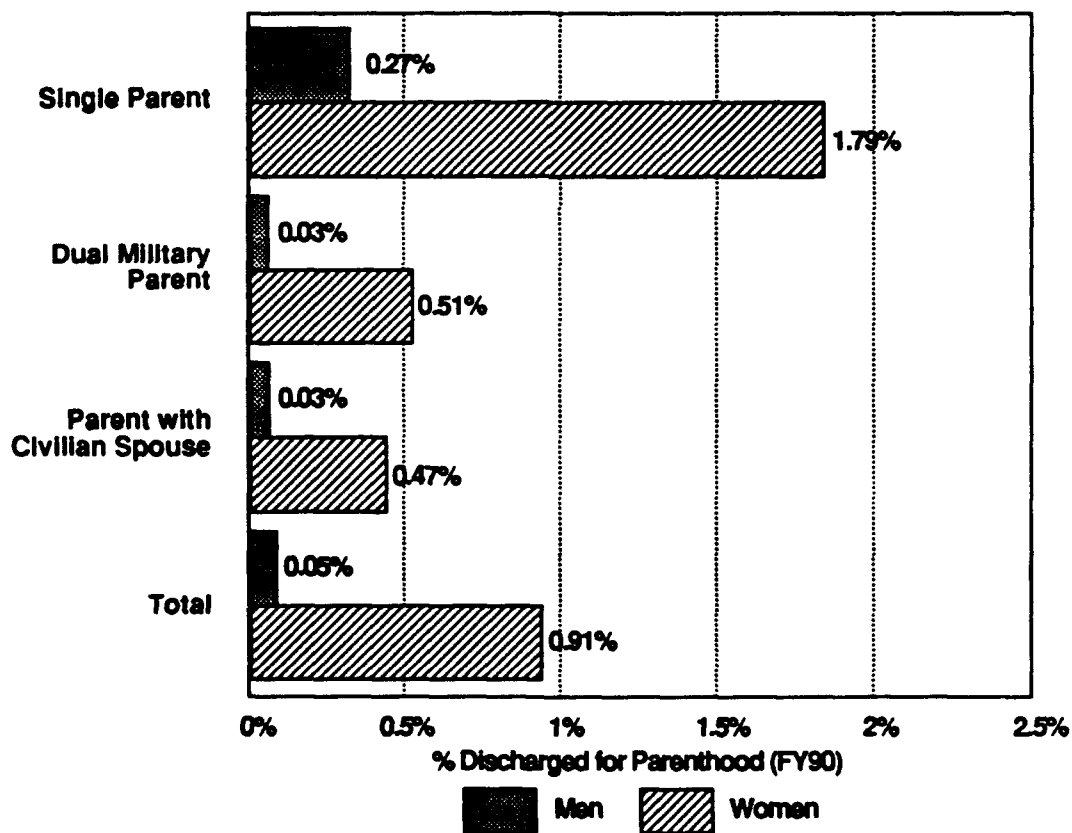
Parenthood separations may be recommended by BUPERS or the member's command "if the member is unable to perform duties assigned, is repetitively absent, or is unavailable for worldwide assignment or deployment due to parenthood" (MILPERSMAN 3620215). Separations of this nature usually involve single or military-married-to-military parents, although any parent who meets the criterion could be subject to disciplinary action and an involuntary parenthood separation. Single or dual military parents who are unable or unwilling to comply with the Dependent Care Certificate requirements (OPNAVINST 1740.4, 1984) (i.e., prepare a contingency plan for dependents) may be given a parenthood discharge. The discharge is usually an administrative one if the parent refuses to make an adequate effort to comply with regulations. Commands may not initiate separation procedures prior to counseling the service member and giving him/her the opportunity to correct the situation.

To compare the number of parenthood discharges awarded to single and married parents, the records of all personnel who were awarded such separations in fiscal year 1990 were extracted from the Enlisted Master Tape Record. Table 8 presents the numbers by sex and marital status.

**Table 8**

**Fiscal Year 1990 Separations of  
Men and Women for Parenthood**

Service Member's Parental Status	Number	
	Men	Women
Single parent	27	91
Dual military parent	2	30
Married parent	55	24
Total	84	145



**Figure 3. Percentage of enlisted parents by marital status who were discharged for parenthood in FY90.**

Both the numbers and rates (see Figure 3) show that military women are awarded a disproportionate number of parenthood separations in comparison to men. The Department of Defense reported that for FY90, 65 percent of all parenthood discharges were awarded to women; these Navy data indicate 63 percent. While the numbers are small, representing less than 1 percent of all female parents (vice service members), women in all marital categories had a higher rate than men. For both sexes, however, single parents were more likely to be given a parenthood discharge than married parents. There was no difference between members whose spouses were civilians and those with military spouses. This latter finding is important because it seems to indicate that military couples, who can receive an involuntary discharge for failing to comply with dependent care regulations, probably are not being separated for this cause.

### **Pregnancy/Childbirth Separations**

Enlisted women are not separated for pregnancy/childbirth unless "it is determined to be in the best interest of the service member or if the member demonstrates overriding and compelling factors of personal need which warrant separation" (MILPERSMAN 3620220). Even then, a separation request will not be approved when the member: (1) has not completed her service obligation resulting from education (officer commissioning program or enlisted training/education that incurs a service obligation), (2) is serving in a rating with a significant personnel shortage; (3) has orders to or is in a program requiring obligated service, or (4) should be retained in the best interest of the service. Almost all of these separations occur during pregnancy. Separations for childbirth would occur in the event the infant was delivered prior to the pregnancy discharge.

The data set that was analyzed to investigate pregnancy/childbirth separations consisted of all discharges awarded women in fiscal year 1990. In Table 9, the results are presented by marital status and enlistment. The rate in the population is based on distributions of all enlisted women by marital status. Ninety percent of the women who were discharged for pregnancy in 1990 were in their first enlistment. The discharge rate was highest among those who were married to another military member and lowest among single women. This finding is partially a function of pregnancy rates among these groups.<sup>5</sup>

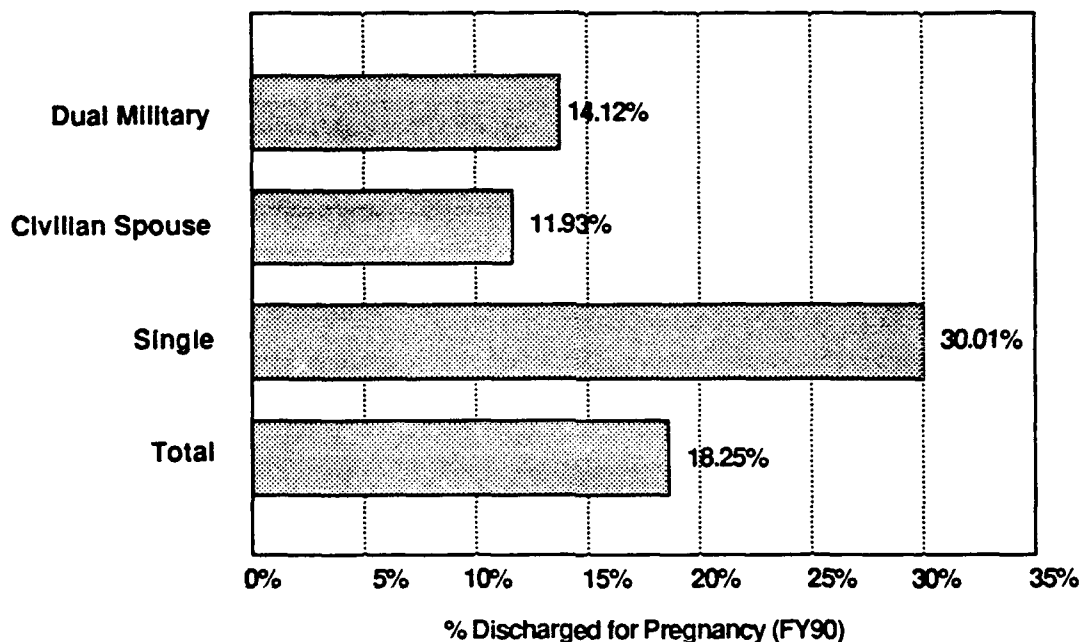
**Table 9**

#### **Women Receiving a Pregnancy Discharge by Enlistment**

Marital Status	Enlistment		Rate in Population (%)
	1st	2nd-4th	
Dual military	349	37	3.37
Civilian spouse	132	40	2.11
Single	493	28	1.96
Total	974	105	2.34

<sup>5</sup>Sixteen percent of the women who had a military spouse were pregnant in May 1990, as were 12 percent of the women who were married to civilians, and 5 percent of the single women in the Navy (Thomas & Thomas, 1990).

The separation rate among pregnant women, shown in Figure 4, also was computed and is based on the estimated number that were pregnant in 1990.<sup>6</sup> This rate represents the proportion of those who became pregnant who were separated from the Navy for pregnancy. Thus, while the table shows that the pregnancy discharge rate among single Navy women was low (1.96%), the figure indicates that 30 percent of those who became pregnant were discharged. Single women were twice as likely as married women to leave the Navy when they became pregnant.



**Figure 4. Percentage of pregnant women by marital status who were discharged.**

Another variable of concern to Navy leadership regarding pregnancy separations is the loss of trained personnel, particularly from sea-intensive ratings where women are underrepresented. To investigate this issue, all enlisted women in the Navy in fiscal year 1990 were coded as holding a sea- or shore-intensive rating, or as being nonrated. The number of pregnancy discharges was determined for each of these groups and compared to the population to arrive at a pregnancy discharge rate. The rates for women in sea- or shore-intensive jobs were identical at 1 percent; whereas, nonrated women had a rate of 3 percent. Thus, there is no reason to believe that working in what many consider a nontraditional job increases the probability that a woman will be separated due to pregnancy. This conclusion supplements the survey finding that the pregnancy rate of women in sea- and shore-intensive ratings does not differ (Thomas & Edwards, 1989).

### Comparison to All Separations

To evaluate the effect on the separation system of hardship, parenthood, and pregnancy discharges, an analysis was conducted of all discharges that occurred in fiscal year 1990. Table 10

<sup>6</sup>These are estimated annual number of pregnancies based on responses of 1,656 women to a survey administered in 1990.



presents the results of the analysis, dichotomized by first versus subsequent enlistment. Since there are over 190 Department of Defense (DoD) separation codes, a scheme for aggregating them into seven groups is frequently used. These groups are titled: behavior reasons, convenience of the government, to enter a commissioning program, end of obligated service, medical reasons, personality disorders, punitive reasons, and sexual deviance. The individual reasons that comprise these groups are listed in the Appendix. Pregnancy, parenthood, and hardship discharges, which are classified as convenience of the government (COG), have been separated out in Table 10. End of obligated service has been eliminated because it is not relevant to a discussion of premature separation.

**Table 10**  
**Reasons for Separation Prior to Completion of Enlistment**

Discharge Reason	Number by Enlistment		Percent of all Discharges
	1st	2nd-5th	
Pregnancy	974	105	3.5
Hardship	491	216	2.3
Parenthood	193	115	1.0
Other COG reasons	4,517	111	16.0
Behavioral	1,755	396	6.1
Commissioning program	576	1,021	5.2
Medical	3,021	1,854	15.9
Personality disorders	6,199	985	23.5
Punitive	6,668	962	24.9
Sexual deviance	386	81	1.5
Total	24,780	5,846	99.9

The review of BUPERS-authorized hardship separations over 12 months and the fiscal year 1990 separation data revealed that single parents represented 21 percent ( $N = 150$ ) of all parents receiving a discharge for hardship and parenthood. Applying this proportion to the total of such discharges in Table 10 yields an estimate of 213, or .7 percent of all FY90 separations. When combined with pregnancy, separations for single parenthood and pregnancy accounted for fewer discharges than any other category with the exception of sexual deviance.

### **Child Care**

While caring for dependents is a concern of all parents, it is a particular concern for single parents or custodial parents who are geographically separated from their spouses. For military parents with such domestic arrangements, the problem is magnified by the need to work irregular

or extended hours, absence from home during deployments or unaccompanied tours, or the requirement to respond to a mobilization. For these reasons, the Navy promulgated a regulation in 1984 requiring that single- and dual-military parents designate who will assume custody of their dependents when contingencies arise (OPNAVINST 1740.4). Personnel who are unable or unwilling to complete the requisite form, called the Dependent Care Certificate, may be separated from service.

The other regulation that responds to the need to provide for dependent care is OPNAVINST 1700.9C, which regulates the operation of child development programs. While all military parents are eligible to use these programs, some commanding officers have interpreted the guidance in the instruction to mean that single- and dual-military parents should be given priority access.

### **Dependent Care Certificates**

The responsibility for implementing OPNAVINST 1740.4 falls solely upon individual commands. The forms are maintained in service records and no requirement to report compliance to a higher echelon has been established. The Dependent Care Certificate must be completed within 6 months of reporting to a new command and updated annually, and commands are required to counsel parents about the regulation. The administrative burden represented by this requirement could be considerable if the number of personnel involved were large. In 1990, 3.1 percent of all E-2 through E-9 men and women were single parents, as were 1.7 percent of all O-1s through O-6s. Dual military parents were 2.5 percent of the enlisted and 3.7 percent of the officers. These percentages represented 27,299 personnel at that time. On the average, one-third of these parents would rotate annually, requiring counseling at their new commands, and the remainder would have to update their forms. Since this task is spread across the Navy, no single command should experience a burden from the requirement.

Because of the lack of accountability, the question of how adequately this instruction is being implemented needs to be addressed. To answer this question, service records of relevant parents were reviewed at 50 Navy commands.<sup>7</sup> Before searching for the 1740/1, the status of the individual as a single- or dual-military parent with a colocated dependent was verified from page 2 entries in the service record. Forms that were present in service records were reviewed to determine whether they represented valid certificates (i.e., present command, within 15 months of current date, signed by individuals who had been designated as caretakers). Twenty of the commands were overseas and 30 were in the United States (including Hawaii). Table 11 presents the summarized results of this search by location of command and marital status of parent.

These data were collected between February 1989 and September 1990. All commands had been notified several months to over a year prior to the time of data collection that researchers would be checking service records for the Dependent Care Certificate. It was obvious from the concentration of signatures dated in the period just before the on-site visits that some commands took advantage of the impending visit to make sure that many of their relevant personnel had valid certificates. Despite this opportunity, the overall figures in Table 11 indicate that fully 67 percent of the personnel had no form in their service records and 19 percent had forms that were outdated or had been completed at a previous command.

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<sup>7</sup>These commands were sites used in the lost time phase of the research.

Compliance with OPNAVINST 1740.4 differed by location. It had been anticipated, because of the possibility of having to evacuate dependents away from imminent danger, that commands overseas would be particularly concerned that persons be identified who would be responsible for dependents. Such was not the case, however, since only 11 percent of the single- and dual-military parents in overseas locations had valid forms, compared to 18 percent of those in CONUS. Marital status of the parent did not influence compliance with the requirement; 72 percent of both groups had no dependent care certificate in their service record.

**Table 11**  
**Compliance with Requirement for Dependent Care Certificate**

	Status of Certificate						Total
	Current		Invalid		Nonexistent		
	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%	
<b>Location</b>							
United States	53	18	73	24	173	58	299
Overseas	51	11	71	16	333	73	455
<b>Parental Status<sup>a</sup></b>							
Single	52	17	36	12	222	72	310
Dual military	49	14	51	14	258	72	358
Overall		14		19		67	

<sup>a</sup>Marital status of 86 parents was unknown.

### **Child Development Centers (CDCs)**

The other area where children of single -and dual-military parents may impact on Navy systems is CDCs, if they are treated differently than other parents (i.e., given priority access). Interviews were conducted with directors of the 19 centers in 17 geographic areas to investigate policies, availability, and special programs. In addition, semiannual reports prepared by these centers for the periods ending December 1989 and June 1990 (to overlap with interviews) were obtained. Table 12 summarizes relevant data from these two sources.

OPNAVINST 1700.9C, 1989 states that child development services shall "be provided to military and civilian dependents as needed for effective operation and for accomplishment of mission" (p 2). Some commanding officers interpret this policy statement to establish priorities for placement in the CDC. Slightly over half of the directors interviewed stated that single- and dual-military parents are given priority for available space at the CDC. Data from the semiannual reports on marital status of the parents of children being served support their statements. Dual military parents appear to be the primary beneficiaries. While 6.2 percent of all Navy parents were married to another military member in 1990 (Thomas & Thomas, 1991), 13 percent of the children in the

on marital status of the parents of children being served support their statements. Dual military parents appear to be the primary beneficiaries. While 6.2 percent of all Navy parents were married to another military member in 1990 (Thomas & Thomas, 1991), 13 percent of the children in the 19 CDCs came from such families. Children of single parents were not overrepresented, however.

**Table 12**

**Summary of Findings from Child Development Centers in 17 Geographic Areas**

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Centers that give single and dual military parents priority access to available spaces = 54%.

	At Centers	In Navy
<b>Marital status of the parents of children. . .</b>		
Single parent	7.7%	6.9%
Dual military parent	13.0%	6.2%
One military, one civilian parent	79.3%	86.9%
<b>Average length of wait for a space to be found for. . .</b>		
Infants (6 weeks-12 months)		12 months
Pretoddlers (12-24 months)		17 months
Toddlers (24-36 months)		11 months
Preschoolers (3 years-kindergarten)		11 months
<b>Average monthly number of children per center. . .</b>		
Being cared for		106
On the waiting lists		211
<b>Operating hours at the center. . .</b>		
Average time to open = 0630		
Average time to close = 1745		

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**Note.** These data are based on interviews and semiannual reports from 19 centers.

The capability of the CDCs to meet the needs of military parents is also of concern. This issue was investigated in terms of the number of children on the waiting list, length of wait, and hours of operation at the 19 centers. The average number of children on the waiting list of each of the CDCs on the last Tuesday of the month was 211; the average number of children being cared for was 106.<sup>8</sup> Depending upon the age of the child, parents waited from 11 to 17 months, on the

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<sup>8</sup>After reviewing these numbers, the head of Child Development Services provided Navy-wide statistics as follows: Based on total FY90 capacity of 12,268 (including preschool capacity) and 97 centers, an average of 126 children are being cared for per center. Based on the FY90 waiting list of 11,964 children and 97 centers, the average number of children per center on waiting lists is 123. Thus, the child care centers visited for this study were not representative of all Navy child care centers in regards to these numbers, perhaps because overseas CDCs were overrepresented in the sample.

average, before a space became available. Even then, single- and dual-military parents would have experienced difficulty in utilizing the CDCs because of their hours of operation. Single parents and dual military parents who are geographic singles usually have no one else to rely upon to deliver and pick up their children from the CDCs. Navy parents with civilian spouses who work probably would have found the 0630 opening time convenient; however, military personnel on rotating shifts usually start the day watch at 0600.

## **Housing and Family Service Centers**

Single women living in barracks who become pregnant create a new requirement for family housing because they must leave bachelor quarters when the child is born. Married women expecting their first child, who are geographic bachelors and living in the barracks also have an impact because they become eligible for housing.

Both single parents and pregnant women, because of their unique circumstances, potentially expand the need for the type of programs provided by FSCs.

### **Housing**

The interaction between housing offices and single parents/pregnant women was explored at the geographic locations where the lost time data were collected. Interviews were held with the directors of 17 offices to investigate several issues of particular concern to these two groups (i.e., priorities, length of wait, and availability of housing for E-3s). Table 13 presents the distribution of responses to the questions.

At almost half of the locations, pregnant women could get on the housing waiting list when they received verification of their pregnancy. At almost 30 percent of the locations, women had to wait until the birth of the child to go to the bottom of the list even though the applications of engaged couples were accepted prior to marriage. Since at all locations families can get on the waiting list as soon as they receive orders to a new duty station, pregnant women were not being treated fairly. At no location where the interviews were conducted were single parents or pregnant women given a priority for housing, although two housing officers stated that they gave a priority to military- married-to-military personnel.

The second question in Table 13 is pertinent because pregnancy rates are highest at the E-2 and E-3 paygrades (Thomas & Edwards, 1989). In half of the geographic areas, these personnel would not be eligible for housing and in 30 percent more they would find it very difficult to get into the few units that were allotted to nonrated personnel.

The final question addresses an issue of concern to all personnel who apply for family housing but would be of particular concern to a single-income, low paygrade parent. The average wait for a 2-bedroom unit in these locations was 13 months. Thus, a woman who cannot get on the waiting list until the third trimester or after childbirth would have to rely on civilian housing during the first year of her child's life.

**Table 13****Responses of Housing Officers to Interview Questions**

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<b>When is a pregnant woman accepted on the housing waiting list?</b>	
When she brings in medical verification of her pregnancy	41%
At end of 2nd trimester of pregnancy.	18%
Not until after birth of child.	29%
No pregnant women assigned to this location.	12%
<b>Are any E-3 personnel residing in family housing?</b>	
No.	50%
Yes, a very limited number.	25%
Yes, in substandard housing or trailers	20%
Yes, on a special need basis.	5%
<b>What is the waiting period for a 2-bedroom unit?</b>	
0-5 months	12%
6-11 months	29%
12-17 months	35%
18-23 months	12%
24 or more months	12%

---

**Family Service Centers (FSCs)**

Directors of FSCs were interviewed in the same 17 locations. Among the questions asked were several that focused on single parents and pregnant women. At 29 percent of the FSCs, programs oriented toward pregnant women (active duty and wives) were offered. Usually, they were Lamaze classes or instruction on caring for the newborn. Programs for single parents were more numerous, existing at somewhat over half of the FSCs. Most often the program consisted of a single parent support group that met on a monthly basis. At one location, this support group consisted solely of men who had recently divorced. A few FSCs offered special classes to single parents on such subjects as deployment (leaving and reuniting with children), role stress, and guide to community resources. Several also offered partnership programs in which two single parents were paired up, or a married parent served as the partner.

When asked if there were needs of single parents and pregnant women that were not being met, 30 percent of the directors stated "no," that the needs of these groups were not unique and they could attend any class or program. The remaining directors provided many suggestions, such as preparation for parenthood, family planning, budgeting, and providing child care at FSCs so that single parents could attend classes.

One FSC overseas had an outstanding program. The local hospital referred all pregnant women to the FSC for a series of three classes, conducted by a community health nurse, that were oriented to each trimester of the pregnancy. Preparation for parenthood classes included one night a month set aside for prospective fathers. The FSC also offered commands a workshop on the management of pregnant women. In the area of pregnancy prevention, there were classes titled "Parent: To be or not to be," "Assertiveness and Single Living," and "Choices, Stress, and Pregnancy." Interestingly, the director felt geographic bachelors with colocated children experienced more problems than single parents. She felt that it was difficult for both of these groups to attend FSC programs because of lack of child care.

To summarize, the directors who were interviewed did not feel that single parents or pregnant women are a burden on the housing or FSC systems. They are not treated differently than other personnel by the housing offices. FSC directors were almost unanimous in their desire to provide any appropriate program Navy personnel may need.

## **DISCUSSION**

The purpose of this review was to investigate whether single parents and pregnant women are a burden on various Navy systems. Three major personnel systems and three support systems were included in the review. Comparisons to other groups in the Navy were made; the situation in which there would be no single parents or pregnant women permitted to serve in the Navy was not considered. Another phase of this research project addresses the impact of pregnant women and single parents upon commands and will be described in a separate report.

### **Recruitment**

Although currently contrary to regulation, single parents may be entering the Navy while retaining custody of their children. Because the data were provided by personnel who enlisted when it was possible to obtain a waiver to the regulation requiring surrender of custody, it is not possible to know whether the ruling was compromised. However, it is apparent that the personnel in the sample either retained or regained custody during their first enlistment.

The screening of women for pregnancy at the Military Enlistment Processing Stations is achieving its goal. In 1990, only 49 women were separated in recruit training due to pregnancy, and these women would not have been eligible for benefits.

Neither pregnant women in recruit training nor single parents with custody of their children impact on recruitment per se. The impact of the former group on recruit training is very slight due to the small number involved and the small investment of funds and time in new recruits. Single parents in their first enlistment who have custody of their dependents could have an impact upon their commands if they are unable to meet their military commitments.

### **Assignment**

Enlisted detailers do not consider single parents or pregnant women to be among the most difficult personnel to assign. Personnel with a spouse in the military, those in specific rates, and personnel who require assignment in a certain geographic region were reported to be, by far, the

most time consuming. An index of the additional detailing burden posed by dual military personnel versus single parents revealed that the former group required over six times as much detailer time as the latter.

Review of the records of personnel returned to CONUS from an overseas duty station prior to their prospective rotation date did not yield information concerning single parents. Women as a group were overrepresented among early returns but cost less to transfer than men because they had smaller households. Pregnancy was rarely a cause for medical evacuations from overseas to CONUS for treatment.

*Reassignment of pregnant women from ships* represents losses to commands and gapped billets that are vacant for an average of 11 weeks, according to detailers. Since over 1,100 women in ships had to be reassigned due to pregnancy in fiscal year 1990, the loss to commands is considerable but was not addressed in this review. The detailing burden was not of much consequence, however.

Single parents are overrepresented among all parents who receive a humanitarian transfer. This finding is reasonable in view of their lack of a spouse to share the burden of extraordinary events involving dependent children. Since the number of such reassignments was very small, however, they cannot be construed as being burdensome to the Navy.

## **Separations**

Single parenthood as a reason for separation from the Navy may be coded as either "hardship" or "parenthood," categories that in combination accounted for 3 percent of the discharges awarded in fiscal year 1990. Single parents were overrepresented in both data sets of all personnel who received such discharges, probably for the same reason that they had proportionately more humanitarian reassignments than married parents. Interestingly, men were more apt than women to receive a hardship discharge and women were more apt to receive a parenthood discharge. The greater proportion of hardship discharges may indicate that men have fewer resources to deal with extraordinary situations involving their dependents than do women. The larger proportion of female parenthood discharges suggests that women who are parents are more likely to be unable to perform their assigned duties than are male parents, or are less able or willing to complete a dependent care certificate. There were no differences in the parenthood separation rates of dual military and other married parents, however, indicating that the requirement for military couples to document a care giver for dependents probably was not a factor in the separations.

Pregnancy separations also represented a very small percentage of the premature separations from the Navy in 1990. Moreover, these pregnant women were not problem personnel, as were those discharged for personality disorders, punitive reasons and behavioral reasons. Thus, their impact upon their commands while in the Navy was not necessarily disruptive, as was the behavior of most of the personnel who were separated. Moreover, separating them was usually a simple administrative procedure. By contrast, involuntary separations are costly in terms of the time and effort required of various personnel.

Rates of pregnancy separations differed by marital status. Single women had the highest rate of discharge, while women who were married to another military member were more apt to receive a pregnancy discharge than women married to civilians. Almost one-third of the estimated number



of single women who became pregnant were discharged, a figure that is more than double that of married women who became pregnant. Given the difficulties of balancing motherhood and military duties, this finding probably is desirable and may result from commands being more lenient with single pregnant women who request a discharge than they are with married pregnant women; or it may be that more single than married women request separation. Although, the discharge rate among nonrated women was higher than that of rated women, there was no difference by rating group. Given the perception that women in sea-intensive ratings are less satisfied in their jobs than women in shore-intensive ratings and that they express this dissatisfaction by attempting to cross-train or leave the Navy, this is a positive finding. Either these women are not dissatisfied or they are not using pregnancy as a way out.

### **Child Care**

A service record search for the dependent care certificates of verified single- and dual-military parents with colocated children yielded a disturbingly low percentage of valid forms. Of even greater concern was the extremely low compliance among overseas commands. The ending of the Cold War may have made a portion of this form less critical than before (i.e., responsible individual to return child to the designated caretaker in the U.S.), but would have no relevance to other sections.

Although half of the CDCs that were visited gave single parents and dual military parents priority standing on their waiting lists, children of single parents are not overrepresented at the centers. This finding is difficult to explain. Parents with only one income have a greater need for relatively inexpensive child care than do parents with two incomes. In CONUS and in many overseas locations, Navy child care centers are usually less expensive than civilian centers or Family Home Care. Single parents may find Navy centers inconvenient because of their working hours since they have no partner to take the child to the center after it opens or pick up the child when the parent has to work late. They also may be more pressured than married parents to make alternative child care arrangements while waiting for an opening in the Navy CDC. If their temporary arrangements prove to be satisfactory, these parents probably do not transfer their children to Navy CDCs when able to do so.

### **Housing and Family Service Centers**

Neither single parents nor pregnant women are receiving preferential treatment with regards to family housing. Pregnant women are in a more difficult position than families being ordered into an area. Many housing directors will not put the name of a pregnant woman on the waiting list until the child is delivered, yet they will accept the applications of personnel being ordered into an area 6 months before they arrive and of engaged couples.

FSCs proved to be very service-oriented and willing to meet the needs of single parents, pregnant women, or anyone they could help. Because parenting, preparation for childbirth, money management, and other programs that have been designed for married parents or pregnant dependents are also applicable to single parents and pregnant Navy women, some directors did not see the need for special programs oriented to these groups. They did, however, recognize that providing for the care of children so that parents could attend these programs was an important consideration.

## CONCLUSIONS

Single parents, as compared to married parents, do not burden the support systems that were included in this investigation. They do require extra documentation when recruited, and were responsible for about one-fifth of the parenthood/hardship discharges awarded to parents in fiscal 1990. In the larger picture, however, these single parent separations represented less than 1 percent of all separations. Despite regulations dictating that they be treated like other personnel with dependents, single parents are considered by some enlisted detailers to be time consuming to assign. Their impact upon the assignment system, however, is much less than that of dual military couples, whether parents or not. The overall conclusion to be drawn is that single parents are not particularly burdensome.

Pregnant Navy women have little impact on the allocation of family housing, on the programs presented at FSCs, or on recruiting/recruit training. They are not considered to be time-consuming to detail, although they are responsible for an unexpected detailing event if assigned to a ship or in one of five overseas areas. Pregnancy is a major reason for women to be discharged, particularly during the first enlistment, and obviously represents a loss that has to be addressed by the recruiting and assignment systems (and possibly training, also). In comparison to other losses from the enlisted ranks, pregnancy has less of an impact on these systems than the commissioning program and virtually every other reason for being discharged.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Because of troubling information that was gathered during data collection, the following recommendations are made.

1. Pregnant women who are living in barracks should be allowed to get on the housing waiting list as soon as medical verification of their pregnancy is made.
2. The reasons why single parents are not making greater use of Navy CDCs should be determined, as this group has the greatest need of all parents for child care.
3. Regulations regarding the Dependent Care Certificate are not being enforced. If this form is expendable or irrelevant, it should be dispensed with; if it is important, commands should be required to comply.

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**APPENDIX**  
**AGGREGATED SEPARATION CODES**

## **AGGREGATED SEPARATION CODES**

### **Convenience Of The Government**

Parenthood  
Dependency  
Hardship  
Pregnancy  
Security Personnel Program  
Other Physical/Mental Conditions Not a Disability  
Entry Level Performance/Conduct  
Separation in Lieu of Retention  
Minority  
Erroneous Enlistment, Induction, Reenlistment  
Defective Enlistment Lack of Jurisdiction  
Separation for Other Good and Sufficient Reasons  
Action Taken by Various Naval Boards/Chief NMPC  
Obesity  
Physical Condition Interfering with Performance of Duty  
Officer USN Training Disqualified Physically  
Officer USN Training Disenrolled  
Convenience of Government/Chief NMPC/Constructive  
Enter College or University  
Employment Law Enforcement Agency  
Employment Teaching Position  
Employment Seasonal Nature  
Accept Public Office  
Conscientious Objector  
Alien  
Sole Surviving Son/Daughter  
Importance to National Health, Safety, or Interest  
Defective Enlistment, Lack of Jurisdiction  
Enlistment/Extension Commitments not Received  
Secretary Plenary Authority  
Transfer Fleet Reserve: Convenience of Government

### **Personality Disorders**

Personality Disorder  
Inaptitude  
Alcohol Abuse  
Drug Abuse Other Than Alcohol  
Drug Abuse, Rehabilitation Failure  
Alcohol Abuse, Rehabilitation Failure

## **Behavior Reasons**

- Fraudulent Entry or Enlistment
- Failure to Support Dependents
- Shirking
- Unsanitary Habits
- Financial Irresponsibility
- Apathy, Defective Attitudes
- Substandard Performance
- Unsatisfactory Performance, Failure to Perform Duties
- Substandard Personal Behavior
- Good of Service, in Lieu of Court Martial
- Transfer Fleet Reserve: Failure to Perform Duties

## **Disciplinary Reasons**

- Frequent Involvement With Civil or Military Authorities
- Convicted by Civil Court
- Unauthorized Absence
- Misconduct, Minor Disciplinary Infractions
- Misconduct, Commission of a Serious Offense
- Court Martial Desertion
- Court Martial
- Frequent Involvement of a Discreditable Nature With Authorities
- Amnesty
- Awaiting Results of Appellate Review
- Writ of Habeas Corpus

## **Sexual Deviance**

- Homosexual Acts or Activity
- Sexual Perversion
- Sexual Deviate
- Sexual Deviate/Aberrant Attitudes
- Homosexual Tendencies
- Homosexual Admission
- Homosexual Marriage
- Homosexual Convicted Court Martial

## **Medical Reasons**

- Disability Severance Pay
- Disability EPTES No Severance Pay PEB Board
- Disability EPTES No Severance Pay MED Board
- Disability Misconduct No Severance Pay
- Disability Not EPTES No Severance Pay PEB Board
- Disability, Permanent Medical Retirement
- Disability Temporary MED Retirement

### **Enter Commissioning Program**

Officer/Warrant Officer USN Accept Commission  
Officer/Warrant Officer Other Service  
Naval Academy/Other Service Academy  
Enter Officer/USNR Training Program  
Officer Other Training

### **End Of Obligated Service**

End Term Enlistment/Fulfillment of Service  
General Demobilization  
Early Separation Under Authorized Program  
End Obligated Service/Transfer Naval Reserve  
End Obligated Service Within 3 Months  
Retire Age 60 With 20 or More Years Federal Service  
Retire 30 Years Federal Service  
Retire Fleet Reserve or 20 Years USNR  
Transfer Fleet Reserve Failure to Receive Commitments  
Transfer Fleet Reserve



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